

AYLS70_ AYLS301_ AYLS151_ Home Young African Leaders Initiative_Simplified

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SourceURL: <https://yali.state.gov/>

Young African Leaders Initiative

The Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) is the United States' signature effort to invest in the next generation of African leaders.

About YALI

Mandela Washington Fellowship

The Mandela Washington Fellowship is YALI's flagship program, bringing African civic, business, and community leaders for academic coursework, leadership training, and networking at U.S. colleges and universities.

Regional Leadership Centers

The four YALI Regional Leadership Centers (RLCs) provide in-person and online training throughout the year in business and entrepreneurship, civic leadership and public management. They also offer opportunities for professional development and networking.

[More about the Regional Leadership Centers](#)

YALI Network

The YALI Network provides free tools and resources to help young African leaders develop the skills and connections they need to become a positive force for change in their communities.

[More about the YALI Network](#)

Join YALIServes 2020!

YALIServes this year will be dedicated to resiliency and how we can all continue to grow as individuals, community members, and business leaders, even in the face of great difficulty. Together, we will still honor International Nelson Mandela Day this year with the YALIServes Digital Day of Action.

[Learn more](#)

Learn about the...

Regional Leadership Centers

YALI Regional Leadership Centers build on existing institutional capacity in Africa to provide high quality training, mentoring, and networking support to a greater number of young leaders than can be reached through the Mandela Washington Fellowship. The Centers reach exceptional young leaders between the ages 18 and 35 from a wide range of backgrounds and diverse experiences.

[More about Regional Leadership Centers >](#)

Mandela Washington Fellowship

The Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders is the United States' flagship program of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) that empowers young people through academic coursework, leadership training, and networking.

[More about the Mandela Washington Fellowship >](#)

Featured YALI Network Online Course

Strategies for Personal Growth and Development

Learn different ways you can develop your business, organization and personal skills.

Select

What's New With YALI?

Her Side Job is Standing Up for Survivors of Abuse

Learn how Gloria is producing content and standing up for women, every day

Meet the Woman Paving the Way for Girls in Kenya

Christine is working to provide women with a strong support network. Here's why.

She Grew Up Without Books. Now She's Fighting for Literacy for Every Child.

Wairimu on literacy, access to education, and community service

[Read More From YALI](#)

**Stay connected with the YALI
Network:**

AYLS70_ AYLS301_AYLS151_ Frequently Asked Questions - Mandela Washington Fellowship_Simplified

SourceURL: <https://www.mandelawashingtonfellowship.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

Frequently Asked Questions

What does YALI stand for?

YALI stands for the Young African Leaders Initiative.

What is the Young African Leaders Initiative?

The [Young African Leaders Initiative](#) (YALI) is a signature effort to invest in the next generation of African leaders. YALI was founded in 2010 and is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2020. YALI was created to support young Africans as they spur growth and prosperity, strengthen democratic governance, and enhance peace and security across Africa. There are three components of YALI: the Mandela Washington Fellowship, Regional Leadership Centers, and the YALI Network.

What is the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

The [Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders](#), begun in 2014, is the flagship program of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) that empowers young people through academic coursework, leadership training, and networking. In 2021, the Fellowship will provide approximately 700 outstanding young leaders from Sub-Saharan Africa with the opportunity to hone their skills at a U.S. college or university with support for professional development after they return home. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is a program of the [U.S. Department of State](#) with funding provided by the U.S. Government and administered by [IREX](#).

What are Regional Leadership Centers?

[YALI Regional Leadership Centers](#) (RLCs) build on existing institutional capacity in Africa to provide high-quality training, mentorship, and networking support to young leaders beyond the Mandela Washington Fellows. RLCs provide on-the-continent programming focused on the Fellowship's core themes – business, civic leadership, and public management. The four RLCs offer training throughout the year in English, French, and Portuguese and are located in Nairobi, Dakar, Accra, and Pretoria. [Learn more about the RLCs.](#)

What is the YALI Network?

The [YALI Network](#) provides members with invaluable opportunities to connect with other leaders in their community and to learn from experts in their field. Opportunities include free online training, professional development, online conversations, and more. [Learn more about the YALI Network.](#)

What are other young leaders initiatives?

In addition to YALI, there are three other U.S. Department of State programs focused on young leaders in the Americas, in Southeast Asia, and in Europe.

The [Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative](#) (YLAI) is a Professional Fellows Program that empowers entrepreneurs and innovative civil society leaders to strengthen capacity and advance their entrepreneurial ideas to contribute to social and economic development in their communities and region. [Learn more about YLAI.](#)

The [Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative](#) (YSEALI) is the U.S. government's signature program to strengthen leadership development and networking in Southeast Asia. Through a variety of programs and engagements, including U.S. educational and cultural exchanges, regional exchanges, and seed funding, YSEALI seeks to build the leadership capabilities of youth in the region, strengthen ties between the U.S. and Southeast Asia, and nurture an ASEAN community. [Learn more about YSEALI.](#)

The [Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative](#) (YTILI) Fellowship is a flagship young European leaders program of the U.S. Department of State. The YTILI experience is a professional development opportunity for innovators to become change makers by developing the skills to be successful entrepreneurs.

By exploring entrepreneurship in the transatlantic context, YTILI fellows develop the expertise to better engage in policy conversations in their home countries, across Europe, and in the transatlantic sphere. [Learn more about YTILI.](#)

What is the Reciprocal Exchange component of the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

Through the [Reciprocal Exchange](#) component, Americans have the opportunity to apply for funding to travel to Africa to collaborate on projects with Fellowship Alumni, building upon connections initiated while Fellowship Alumni were in the United States. These partnerships and professional connections are intended to form lasting relationships, expand markets and networks, and increase mutual understanding. [Learn more about Reciprocal Exchanges.](#)

What is the Professional Development Experience component of the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

Through the [Professional Development Experience](#) (PDE), a group of competitively-selected Fellows remain in the United States for four weeks after the Leadership Institutes to work with private, public, and non-profit organizations each year after the Summit. Both Fellows and hosts benefit from discussing shared issues and challenges in their sectors, broadening their

perspectives, and positioning U.S. organizations for international engagement. [Learn more about PDEs.](#)

What are the eligibility requirements for the Fellowship?

Applicants will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is open to young African leaders between the ages of 25 and 35 who meet the [criteria listed in the eligibility information](#).

What are the criteria for selection?

Selection panels will use various criteria to evaluate applications. To view the full list of criteria, [review the eligibility information](#).

If I have a disability, will the Mandela Washington Fellowship accommodate my special needs?

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship. The Mandela Washington Fellowship does not discriminate against applicants because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or any other protected characteristic as established by U.S. law. [Learn more about the Fellowship's application policy.](#)

Each Fellow's needs are evaluated individually so that the host institution and IREX can determine the reasonable accommodations needed to ensure full participation in program activities. [Learn more about what types of reasonable accommodations may be available during the Fellowship.](#)

How can I partner with the Fellowship in the United States?

Many local and multinational corporations, NGOs, universities, and regional institutions have become partners and are directly supporting the Mandela Washington Fellowship by hosting Fellows, collaborating with them on new initiatives in the United States and Africa, and offering access to grants, financing, mentoring, and other professional development opportunities.

Learn more about how you can work with the Fellowship on our [Partnership Information](#) page.

How can I partner with the Fellowship in Africa?

Please visit yali.state.gov/network to reach out to the YALI Network and visit yali.state.gov/RLC to connect with the Regional Leadership Center to see if there are opportunities for partnerships with them, as well as the U.S. Embassy in your region.

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AYLS70_Application and Eligibility Information - Mandela Washington Fellowship

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Learn more about how to be a part of the next generation of African leaders!



The 2022 Mandela Washington Fellowship application is now closed.

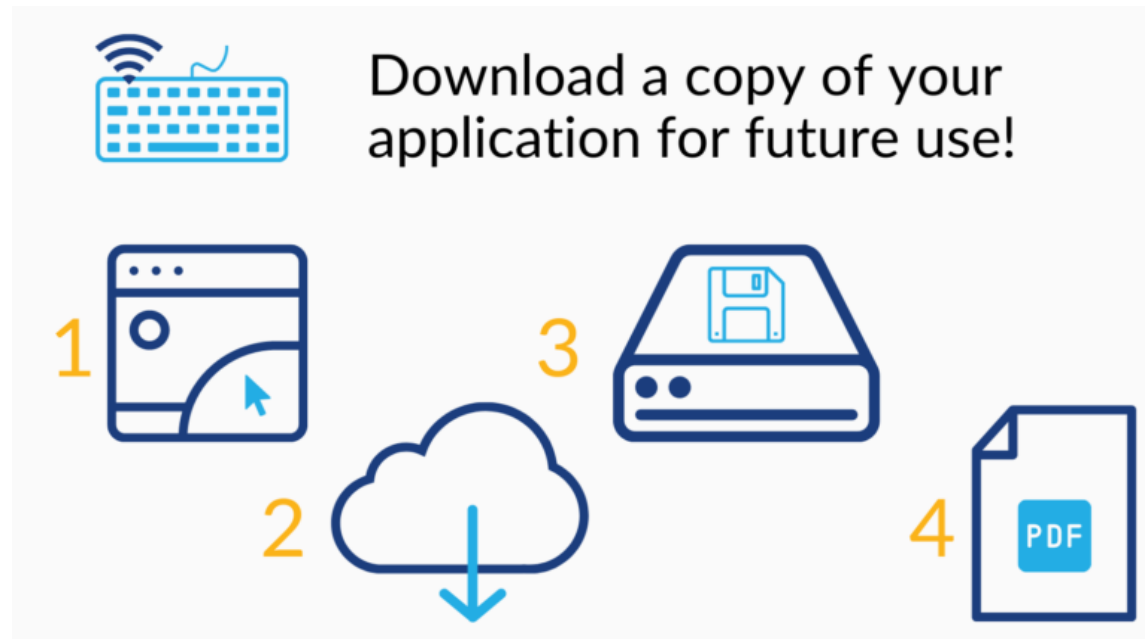
The Fellowship is an unparalleled opportunity to...

- Participate in a six-week [Leadership Institute](#) at a U.S. college or university to share your experiences with and learn from U.S. citizens and other Fellows.
- Explore industries beyond your daily work and expand your expertise.
- Attend a [Summit](#) with young African leaders in Washington, D.C.

- Meet with U.S. Government, civic, and business leaders.
- Strengthen your work through new connections, skills, and ideas.

Join a continental and global [Alumni Network](#) to help you seek innovative solutions to common challenges.

Need to download a copy of your application? Follow these simple steps:



1. Log into your application at apply.mandelawashingtonfellowship.org.
2. Click "Generate PDF" to download a copy of your application.
3. Save your application locally on your computer.
4. Use your application for reference, such as for a Fellowship semi-finalist interview with a U.S. Embassy.

[Download a copy of your application](#)

This is an experience of a lifetime. The [Fellowship] has provided a medium for interacting and networking with each other, sharing our dreams and aspirations... I am so privileged to be a part of this generation that will foster change for the betterment of our families, communities, cities, countries, and Africa."



Application Timeline

- **August 18, 2021** | Application opens
- **September 15, 2021** | Application deadline
- **November 2021 – January 2022** | Semi-finalists interviewed by local U.S. embassies and consulates
- **Late March 2022** | Applicants are notified of their status
- **May 2022** | Visa processing and Pre-Departure Orientations for Finalists
- **Mid-June 2022** | Fellowship begins in the United States

Application and Selection Process

Selection Process and Criteria

The Mandela Washington Fellowship selection process is a merit-based open competition. After the deadline, all eligible applications will be reviewed by independent readers.

Following this review, chosen semi-finalists will be interviewed by the U.S. embassies or consulates in their home countries. Selected semi-finalists will be required to participate in these in-person interviews in their home country within Africa. If advanced to the semi-finalist round, applicants must provide a copy of their international

passport (if available) or other government-issued photo identification at the time of the interview. Selected Finalists are required to attend the mandatory Pre-Departure Orientation in their home country within Africa.

Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is open to young African leaders who meet the following criteria:

- Are between the ages of 25 and 35 on or before the application deadline, although exceptional applicants ages 21-24 will be considered;
- Are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the United States;
- Are eligible to receive a United States J-1 visa;
- Are not employees or immediate family members of employees of the U.S. Government (including a U.S. embassy or consulate, USAID, or other U.S. Government entity);
- Are proficient in reading, writing, and speaking English (additional guidance coming for applicants who are deaf);
- Are citizens of one of the following countries: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, or Zimbabwe;
- Are residents of one of the above countries; and
- Are not Alumni of the Mandela Washington Fellowship.

Please note that Fellows are not allowed to have dependents, including spouses and children, accompany them during the Fellowship.

The U.S. Department of State and IREX reserve the right to verify all information included in the application. In the event of a discrepancy, or if the information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible.



What are the criteria for selection?

The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications (not in order of importance):

- A proven record of leadership and accomplishment in business, civic engagement, or public service;
- A demonstrated commitment to public or community service, volunteerism, or mentorship;
- The ability to work cooperatively in diverse groups and to respect the opinions of others;
- Strong social and communication skills;
- An energetic, positive attitude;
- A demonstrated knowledge of, interest in, and professional experience in the preferred sector/track; and
- A commitment to return to Africa and apply leadership skills and training to benefit the applicant's country and/or community after they return home.

Application Resources

Got questions? Visit our [Frequently Asked Questions about the Fellowship application](#) to learn answers to common queries.

Check out our [Resources page](#) to download and learn more about:

- Instructions for the 2022 Fellowship Application
- Information for Prospective Fellows with Disabilities
- Information for Prospective Fellows Who Are or May Become Pregnant

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AYLS070_Apply for the Fellowship - Mandela Washington Fellowship

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Apply for the Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions: 2022 Fellowship Application

Can I access the application from my phone or tablet?

Yes, you can access the application from any device that is connected to the internet. The application is mobile-friendly, so it is easy to apply from your phone or tablet.

I don't have reliable access to high-speed internet. Can I still complete an application?

Yes. The application system functions in low-bandwidth environments and can be saved. As such, you can complete the application over multiple sittings, which may be useful if you do not have constant access to the internet or are traveling to internet cafés or co-working spaces to complete your application. Please save your application often to avoid losing your responses due to potential internet disruptions.

How do I enter my name into the application?

You should type your name exactly as it appears on your passport or other official government identification documents. For example, John's passport lists Ngozi as his surname and John Michael as his given name. He should type John Michael in the First Name(s) (Given Name(s)) field and Ngozi in the Last Name (Surname or Family Name) field of the application.

I am unable to move past the Eligibility section. How do I apply?

Please review the eligibility requirements. The application will not let you proceed unless you meet the technical eligibility requirements and have fully completed the section.

What if I am not eligible for the Fellowship?

If you are not eligible to apply, we encourage you to join the [YALI Network](#) and explore other exchange program opportunities offered by the U.S. Department of State's [Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs](#).

I signed up for email updates from the YALI Network and cannot get into the Mandela Washington Fellowship online application system. What do I do?

Signing up for YALI Network email updates does not create an account for you in the online application system. You must create a separate account at apply.mandelawashingtonfellowship.org to apply through the Mandela Washington Fellowship online application system.

How can I log in to the application system and see my information from last year?

All previous applications have been erased. You will need to register again at apply.mandelawashingtonfellowship.org to complete the 2022 application.

Can I submit a paper copy of the Mandela Washington Fellowship application?

No, you must submit your application through the Mandela Washington Fellowship online application system (apply.mandelawashingtonfellowship.org). Paper applications or applications via email attachment will not be accepted.

Can I submit more than one application for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

No, you may submit only one application. Submitting additional applications will disqualify you.

I have multiple email addresses, including some for personal use and some for my work. Which one should I use for the Mandela Washington Fellowship application?

You should use the email address that you access most frequently and that can be accessed from any internet connection. Work email addresses that cannot be accessed outside your office, or that you will not be able to access if you change jobs, are not recommended. Please use only one email address to ensure that you receive all correspondence regarding the application process.

I cannot afford to pay an application fee. How should I apply?

There is no fee to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship.

The application instructions say all answers must be my “own, original work.” What does that mean?

All answers must be your own ideas and in your own words. Be certain not to plagiarize, which is taking someone else’s work or ideas and presenting them as your own. If you use another person’s writing, ideas, words, or materials, you must credit the source. Do not cut and paste ideas from the internet or other sources. Plagiarism is strictly forbidden at many organizations and academic institutions in the United States, and those who plagiarize their application materials will be disqualified. This also includes using the wording from another applicant or Fellowship Alumni in your application. The U.S. Department of State and IREX will be checking all applications for plagiarism. For more information, please visit the [Plagiarism.org website](https://www.plagiarism.org).

After I complete and submit my application, can I go back in and make changes or add supplemental documents at a later date?

No, all submitted applications are final. Once you have submitted your application, you can no longer add any additional information or make any changes either through the online system or via email. All information and documents must be uploaded prior to your final submission, so be sure to check everything carefully before you submit. If you have any questions about or problems with your application, please contact MWFellowship@irex.org **before you submit**. If your technical eligibility for the Fellowship changes at any point, please email MWFellowship@irex.org as well as your local U.S. embassy or consulate immediately.

I’m not sure which track to list as my first choice. How should I choose how to rank them?

You should list the tracks according to what best aligns to your current work and/or long-term professional goals. All tracks will have a focus on leadership development and will help Fellows strengthen widely transferable skills including strategic planning, communications and marketing, financial management, and organizational management. For more detailed information on each track, please review the *Institute Track* section in the [Application Instructions](#).

My current work doesn't seem to fit into any of the tracks (Leadership in Business, Leadership in Civic Engagement, Leadership in Public Management). Should I still apply?

Absolutely! Past Mandela Washington Fellows have come from many different backgrounds and work in a wide variety of fields. All three tracks instill transferable skills, and the overarching topics are applicable to a variety of sectors, including but not limited to: entrepreneurship, non-profit management, healthcare, journalism, public service, education, tourism, human rights, agriculture, and environmental protection. Check out the bios of past Mandela Washington Fellows in our [online directory](#) to get a better idea of the variety of industries that Fellows represent.

Disability and Other Accommodations

I have a physical disability or other special need and I need another person's assistance to complete my application. Is this considered plagiarism?

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship. Applicants with physical disabilities or special needs who require another person's assistance to complete an application may use such assistance. However, the thoughts, ideas, and content of your application must be your own; you cannot collaborate with the person assisting you on the content of your application.

Can applicants with disabilities apply? Why does the application ask if I have a disability?

Yes, applicants with disabilities are encouraged to apply. The Mandela Washington Fellowship does not discriminate against applicants because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected characteristic as established by U.S. law. The Fellowship is committed to fairness, equity, and inclusion. The application includes a question about disability so that we are aware of what kinds of accommodations might be needed if you are interviewed or selected. Your answer to the question regarding disabilities is voluntary and will not impact your chances of acceptance.

How are Fellows with disabilities supported during the Fellowship?

Each Fellow's needs are evaluated individually so that the Institute Partner and IREX can determine reasonable accommodations to ensure the Fellow's full participation in program activities. Please [review the information for applicants with disabilities](#) for more on what types of reasonable accommodations may be available during the Fellowship.

How are pregnant Fellows supported during the Fellowship?

Applicants who are pregnant are encouraged to apply. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is committed to supporting a positive learning and networking environment for all Fellows. The Fellowship is an intensive program, which includes long days and extended periods of time sitting in a classroom or walking on excursions and site visits. Airlines also have different policies for flying while pregnant and may restrict travel for individuals who are pregnant after a certain period in their pregnancy. If you are pregnant and are at less than 20 weeks by the start of the Fellowship in early June, you should be able to fully participate in the program. Please [review the information for Fellows who are pregnant](#) for more on the support and resources available to pregnant Fellows during the Fellowship.

Technical Eligibility Requirements: Age

I am currently 35 years old but will turn 36 before the Mandela Washington Fellowship application deadline closes. Am I eligible for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

No, you are not eligible to apply for the Fellowship. Applicants must be between the ages of 25 and 35 on or before the application submission deadline, although exceptional applicants ages 21-24 will be considered. If you are still 35 on September 15, 2021, you are eligible to apply. No exceptions will be made for candidates older than 35.

I am younger than 25 years old. Am I eligible for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

Yes, you may be eligible to apply for the Fellowship. Exceptional candidates between the ages of 21 and 24 on or before the application submission may be considered. If you are 21 on September 15, 2021, you are eligible to apply. No exceptions will be made for candidates younger than 21.

I have submitted my application. How do I report future changes to my employment or residency that affect my technical eligibility prior to the start of the 2022 Fellowship?

If you do not meet all technical eligibility requirements in this section currently or at the start of the program, you will not be able to participate in the 2022 Fellowship. If your technical eligibility for the Fellowship changes at any point, please email MWfellowship@irex.org as well as your local U.S. embassy or consulate immediately.

Technical Eligibility Requirements: Citizenship

I am not sure if people from my country are eligible for the Fellowship. Where can I find a list of eligible countries?

Please visit the Fellowship [application and eligibility information page](#) to view the list of countries eligible for the 2022 Mandela Washington Fellowship or reference the *Technical Eligibility Requirements* section in the [Application Instructions](#).

I left my African home country as a refugee and am now a U.S. citizen. Am I eligible to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

No, you are not eligible to apply for the Fellowship. U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and green card holders are not eligible to apply for the Fellowship under any circumstances.

I have dual citizenship in my African home country and another country. Am I eligible to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

Maybe. If you live in one of the sub-Saharan African countries eligible for the Fellowship and reside in another sub-Saharan African country that is eligible, you are eligible to apply. If you are accepted as a Fellow, you must apply for your U.S. visa and enter the United States on your eligible country passport. If you live in any country outside of Sub-Saharan Africa, you are not eligible to apply for the Fellowship regardless of your citizenship. Please see the information on residency below for more details.

I am an employee of the U.S. Government but am a citizen and resident of an eligible country. Am I eligible to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

No, you are not eligible to apply for the Fellowship. Employees and immediate family members of employees of the U.S. Government are not eligible to apply for the Fellowship.

Technical Eligibility Requirements: Residency

What do you mean by country of residence?

Your country of residence is the country in which you currently live and have a physical address. You must live in one of the countries eligible for the Fellowship to apply.

I am a citizen of Ghana currently living in South Africa. Am I eligible to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship? What option do I choose for my country?

Yes, you are eligible for the Fellowship. Applicants living outside their country of citizenship but in another eligible country may apply. Select the correct country of citizenship and list your current permanent address.

I am a resident of the United States, but I am originally from an African country. Am I eligible to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

No, you are not eligible for the Fellowship. Residents of the United States, or of any non-eligible country, are not eligible for the Mandela Washington Fellowship under any circumstances, even those with temporary residency such as students.

I am an African student studying in France (or another non-eligible country). Am I eligible to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

No, you are not eligible for the Fellowship. Residents of non-eligible countries are not eligible for the Fellowship under any circumstances, even those with temporary residency such as students. You may be eligible for a future Fellowship year once you permanently return to your home country, provided that you meet the other technical eligibility requirements.

I previously resided in the United States for school or work but have returned and am now a resident in an eligible African country. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, if you are currently both a citizen and a resident of an eligible African country, you are eligible to apply (provided that you meet the other technical eligibility requirements).

I am a citizen of a non-eligible country but have lived all my life in Sub-Saharan Africa. Am I eligible to apply for the Mandela Washington Fellowship?

No, you must be both a citizen and resident of an eligible country to apply for the Fellowship.

Technical Eligibility Requirements: Language

I am not proficient in English. Can I participate in the Mandela Washington Fellowship using another language?

No. The Fellowship will be conducted entirely in English. High-level proficiency in written and spoken English is required for the Fellowship. Applicants who are deaf: please note that interpretation in the United States may only be available in American Sign Language (ASL). If you are selected as a Fellow you should be proficient in, or be prepared to learn, ASL prior to arrival in the United States.

How will language abilities be assessed?

Language abilities will be assessed through the online application and, if you are chosen for the next stage, during an interview at your local U.S. embassy or consulate. TOEFL scores are not required. You can practice and improve your English language skills for free through the [Online Professional English Network](#) or through [Voice of America's Learning English website](#). Selected Fellows will also have access to Fellowship-provided ESL materials to help them prepare for the Fellowship.

My native language is not English. Can I submit my application documents in my native language?

No. All applications must be written in English. Any supplemental documents originally written in another language must be submitted with an English language translation.

Technical Eligibility Requirements: Miscellaneous

Must I have attended university or have a university degree to apply?

No. Formal education plays a role in terms of what we are looking for in applicants, but you will not be disqualified if you do not have a formal diploma or degree.

I am currently serving in my country's military, defense ministries, police, or other law enforcement. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Previous restrictions for this program have been lifted and we are able to consider applications from members of the military, defense ministries, and police.

Will I be able to apply for a visa to another country while in the United States?

If you are selected as a Fellow and are planning to pursue business, education, or other opportunities in a foreign country after the Fellowship, we encourage you to secure required visas prior to your travel to the United States. In most instances, it is impossible to apply for visas to travel to other countries while you are away from your home country.

Will I be able to take time off during the Fellowship to attend to other matters?

No, Fellows are expected to be fully engaged during the Fellowship. This includes full attendance at and participation in all required activities, events, and sessions during the Institute, the Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit, and, if applicable, the Professional Development Experience.

I have a family and would like to bring them with me to the United States if I am selected as a Fellow. Is this allowed?

No, you may not bring any members of your family with you to the United States. Program rules prohibit Fellows from bringing their dependents or other family members, and no dependent visas will be issued.

For additional information, please see the Application Instructions on the Resources page. You may contact our team at MWFellowship@irex.org with any questions not answered on this page.

[Return to Application & Eligibility Information](#)

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